

Fwd: RT: CTV News Network - PowerPlay - Minister Mendicino comments on the ongoing protests in Ottawa - 2022-01-28 - 17:05 EST

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Subject: RT: CTV News Network - PowerPlay - Minister Mendicino comments on the ongoing protests in Ottawa - 2022-01-28 - 17:05 EST

Rough Transcript

Station: CTV News Channel - PowerPlay

Time/heure: 17:05 ET

Date: 2022-01-28

Summary: Minister Mendicino comments on the ongoing protests in Ottawa.

Unknown: We have significantly increased the level local, provincial and national communication and coordination commensurate to the evolving nature of the demonstration. This includes bringing in significantly more police, natural security, emergency services and city resources.

It is simple. If you do not need to be downtown this weekend, avoid the area. For those of you who live town, examine expect delays and major traffic disruptions.

Host: Marco Mendicino is the minister, thanks for coming on the program.

Minister Mendicino: Thanks, Todd, do about to see you too.

Host: So your read on what you are seeing in Ottawa, your job front and centre here, how to make sure that public safety is maintained?

Minister: Well, you maintain public safety by ensuring that police and other partners within the public safety apparatus are closely monitoring the situation, have got the resources and the ground and are working within the broader community to respond to the situation as required. And, look, I will just say, of course we recognize that there is a right to peaceful protests, but there's a big distinction between that and some of the expression that is we've seen from the leaders of this convoy and you pointed it out, you know, the flying confederate flags, the equating of vaccine mandates to the resurge gent Nazi Germany, calling for the violent overthrow of the

government. Of course, Canadians reject that. And truckers do as well. 90% vaccinated, you know, you've seen the truckers alliance put some distance between themselves and this convoy because it does represent I think a fringe element. The best way to get back to normal is to continue to get vaccinated and our government will continue to pursue that in conjunction with Canadians.

Host: Some link to the protest say they want vaccine mandates to be repealed, which seems highly unlikely, of course. If this protest doesn't end by Monday, then what?

Minister: Well, that's why it's important that police services as well as the sergeant-at-arms who's responsible for the safety and security of everyone that works on the hill, are providing guidance and direction and realtime to everyone. You heard the chief and others say to residents who work in the downtown core, look, stay home. We'll find other ways to continue to ensure that the business of government goes on and that those who need essential services get them. You've seen throughout the pandemic that we've been able to leverage virtual parliament. We've done that against the backdrop of a pandemic and we'll continue to follow the best advice that we're getting from police and other partners that work in the public safety apparatus and of course those decisions are being taken independent of the elected government.

Host: I know in your role you've no doubt had an opportunity to see some of the language on line. Some of it is extreme and violent. Those who are either in support of the convoy or have their own agenda here. What are we to make of that, that level of anger?

Minister: Very troubling and it's actually quite discouraging. I don't know when the last time you logged on to Twitter and felt particularly enlightened, I think a lot of us feel like we go on, there's a torrent of harmful abusive content, you know, earlier this week, I had to make the point that one of my colleagues, Omar Alghbra was blatantly called a terrorist and some of that was linked to the support of the leadership of the convoy. So I think we are generally concerned about the fringe elements that are very angry and I think that there needs to be a bright line between what is robust, free speech, constructive dialogue around the public health care measures that we've followed thus far and, you know, the type of conduct that amounts to hate speech, that amounts to incitement and that amounts to violence. And of course Canadians get that.

Host: The Go Fund Me campaign for the convoy has raised somewhere in the vicinity of \$7 million. Some of the donations anonymous, others coming from outside of Canada. No doubt there is anger out there. You know, they've also got people signing on to a petition, basically asking the Canadian government to lift these mandates or else resign. What do you make of the amount of support, and I understand it's small relatively speaking to the size of the country and the number of Canadians, but nevertheless, the very loud support that this has?

Minister: Well, I think you kind of hit the nail on the head, it is loud, it's also very small and, look, Go Fund Me I think has said that they have put some suspension on the release of those funds pending some additional questions asked about where it's coming from and most importantly, what it's going to be used for. But I will tell you, this I mean, if it's going to be used to continue to proliferate hate speech and the flying every confederate flags and 9 spread of false lies about those who work in the public health care sector or who work in the elective sphere to hell Canadians get through the pandemic, there should be actions taken but those are decisions for the Go Fund Me and police services who are taking things independently

Host: Other thing I want to get you read on as well. No doubt we all are proud Canadian. When you see the convoy and all of those Canadian flags and people trying to send the message that this is about Canadian patriotism, talking about the government, you're a part of, being linked to tyranny, what goes through your mind, Marco?

Minister: Well, look, we are Canadian, we believe in democracy. And democracy, you know, as a hallmark has to involve vigorous debate. And, you know, I have the honour of working in a chamber where that debate can be very intense and very emotional Alberta times. Personally, the pandemic has demonstrated that. We have to create a space for that and that is one of the great engines of progress and forward motion. But at the same time, we need to draw some prince Harry tears some, very bright lined boundaries around what is hate speech, what is the false spread of disinformation. And most importantly, incitement to violent, because that actually undermines our public safety, undermines our democracy, around Canadians I think appreciate where those bright lines need to be drawn and I think it's unfortunate and regrettable that some of

the leaders of this convoy have fallen into that category. But, look, we've got people on the ground. I know that they are working very hard and we're going to continue to monitor the situation to ensure public safety.

Host: Just quickly before we go, are you concerned that extremist groups might use this weekend to recruit or expand their reach in our country?

Minister: Well, look, I think that's why we have so many working within the public safety to keep eyes on the situation very carefully. But I think, look, let's not overstate what this is. I believe that those who express the kinds of, you know, conduct that can be clearly denounced, will be rejected by the vast majority of Canadians. Truckers have taken up vaccination to, you know, a 90% rate. We are the most vaccinated country in the world. That is I think a source of pride for Canadians, because we are following advice. And that's how we get back to work. That's how we get kids back to school, and most importantly, that's how we get back to normal which everybody wants and which we're going to work tirelessly to get to.

Host: Marco Mendicino, Canada's Public Safety Minister joining us today from Toronto, good to see you, Marco, appreciate your time.

Due to the nature of closed captioning, grammatical and editorial errors may be found within the attached transcript. Étant donné la nature du sous-titrage, il peut y avoir des erreurs grammaticales et de rédaction dans la transcription ci-attachée.

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